



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
Washington, D.C. 20231  
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/658,390      | 09/08/2000  | Arthur J. Coury      | FTI 126             | 3456             |

7590 01/06/2003

PATREA L. PABST  
HOLLAND & KNIGHT LLP  
ONE ATLANTIC CENTER, SUITE 2000  
1201 WEST PEACHTREE, N.E.  
ATLANTA, GA 30309-3400

EXAMINER

WILLIS, MICHAEL A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1617

DATE MAILED: 01/06/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

|                              |                               |                              |  |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Office Action Summary</b> | Application No.<br>09/658,390 | Applicant(s)<br>COURY ET AL. |  |
|                              | Examiner<br>Michael A. Willis | Art Unit<br>1617             |  |

-- *Th MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --*

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 October 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 38-49 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 38-49 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____  |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                         | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) <u>5</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

### **DETAILED ACTION**

Applicant's amendment of 9 October 2002 is entered. Claim 38 is amended. Claims 1-37 are cancelled. Claims 38-49 are pending. Any previous rejections that are not restated in this Office Action are hereby withdrawn. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

### ***Information Disclosure Statement***

Applicant's request that the IDS submitted 16 August 2001, paper #5, be considered is acknowledged. See attached copy with initials and signature.

### ***Election/Restrictions***

Applicant's election in paper #8, submitted 11 March 2002, of claim 38 as the elected species is acknowledged. As stated previously, claims 38-49 are examined as they read on claim 38.

### ***Response to Amendment***

Claims 38-49 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Zajackowski et al (US Pat. 5,700,873) for reasons as stated previously.

Applicant argues that the amendment to claim 38 of "wherein the composition is capable of forming a gel upon polymerization" patentably distinguishes the instant claims over the prior art. Applicant argues that Zajackowski teaches in the abstract and col. 3, lines 4-8, that the copolymer does not form a gel.

Applicant's argument is not convincing. First of all, the recitation that an element is "capable" of performing a given function is not a positive limitation but only requires the ability to so perform. It does not constitute a limitation in any patentable sense. Secondly, the teachings of Zajaczkowski are mis-characterized in that the reference clearly states that the disclosed polymers, when processed in a single stage polymerization step may yield a gel (see col. 3, lines 1-4). Therefore, the polymers disclosed in the reference are capable of forming a gel.

Claims 38-49 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zajaczkowski et al (US Pat. 5,700,873) for reasons as stated previously.

Applicant argues that the reference teaches the formation of water-soluble material that does not gel upon polymerization. On the contrary, as discussed above, the reference clearly teaches that the polymers may form a gel when processed in a single stage polymerization step (see col. 3, lines 1-4).

Applicant further argues that the reference teaches away from the claimed compositions which are capable of forming gels upon polymerization, since the reference teaches that gels cannot be processed for their desired applications. As stated above, the recitation that an element is "capable" of performing a given function is not a positive limitation but only requires the ability to so perform. It does not constitute a limitation in any patentable sense. Furthermore, this argument is not found persuasive because disclosed examples and preferred embodiments do not constitute a teaching which is away from a broader disclosure or nonpreferred embodiments. *In re*

*Susi*, 169 USPQ 423 (CCPA 1971). "A known or obvious composition does not become patentable simply because it has been described as somewhat inferior to some other product for the same use." *In re Gurley*, 31 USPQ2d 1130, 1132 (Fed. Cir. 1994).

### ***Conclusion***

**THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael A. Willis whose telephone number is (703) 305-1679. The examiner can normally be reached on alt. Mondays and Tuesday to Friday (9am-6:30pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sreeni Padmanabhan can be reached on (703) 305-1877. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)

Application/Control Number: 09/658,390

Page 5

Art Unit: 1617


872-9306 for regular communications and (703) 872-9307 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1234.



Michael A. Willis  
Examiner  
Art Unit 1617

maw  
December 30, 2002



THEODORE J. CRIARES  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
GROUP 1200/600